

Printing History News

The Newsletter of the National Printing Heritage Trust,
Printing Historical Society and Friends of St Bride Library

Number 13 † Winter 2006

Printing Historical Society AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Printing Historical Society will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday 27 March 2007, at the St Bride Library. The business of the meeting will be succeeded at 5:30 by a talk by Anthony Edwards, Professor of Textual Studies at DeMontfort University, Leicester, entitled 'Directions in the study of English incunables'. All are welcome to attend the meeting and talk (but non-members will not be able to vote at the AGM).

NPHT Notes

College printing

The National Printing Heritage Trust is gathering information on colleges and universities which have letterpress equipment, whether used for teaching or merely in storage. If you know of any such equipment, please send brief details (type of equipment, location, current use) to the Hon. Correspondent, Paul W. Nash, at 8 Fairfield Drive, Witney, Oxon. OX28 5LB, e-mail paul.w.nash@virgin.net.

Printing equipment

Those with information on printing equipment, machinery, type etc. for sale or disposal in the United Kingdom should contact Bernard Seward at 164b Wellington Hill West, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4QP.

St Bride Events

Book design conference

Contemporary book design. This one-day conference will be held at St Bride on Friday 19 January 2007, with talks by leading designers including Andrew Barker, Derek Birdsall, Françoise Berserik, Phil Baines, Robert Dalrymple, Ron Costley and Jim Stoddart. For further information please contact

St Bride on 020 7353 3331, e-mail lauranewport@stbridefoundation.org or visit www.stbride.org.

Friends conference 2007

The 2007 Friends of St Bride Conference will be held at St Bride on 31 May and 1 June. The theme will be 'Great British Design?' Full details of the event, speakers, exhibitions, fees etc. will shortly be posted on the St Bride website at www.stbride.org. As usual, the atmosphere will be informal and talks will combine scholarship with humour, vigour and original thought and analysis. Anyone interested in presenting a paper should contact the Chairman of the Friends or the editor of *PHN* (for contact details please see page 4).

Exhibition

Printing the toy theatre. Wednesday 21 November 2006–January 2007 (closing date to be confirmed, please check with the Library). The English toy theatre ('a penny plain and twopence coloured') grew out of the Regency trade in prints, toys and novelties, initially from the shop of William West in Exeter Street, Covent Garden. This exhibition uses prints, original plates and ephemera, largely from private collections, to show how a rather shadowy group of small-scale entrepreneurs produced and marketed sheets of scenes and characters, with playbooks, and 'tinselled portraits', passing on printing plates, pirating images and moving from one address to another, while also trading in a huge variety of other items, such as valentines, 'conversation cards' and, in the case of West himself, pornographic song books. Many later artists and writers were affected by the toy theatres of their childhood.

The material on show offers an instructive cross section of graphic reproduction methods from etching with hand colouring, to lithography with stencil colouring and finally different methods of colour printing. For further details please see the website at www.stbride.org.

Printing Historical Society: notice of membership renewal for 2007

Kenneth Brooks

The annual subscription to the Printing Historical Society for January to December 2007 is now due and I am using *Printing History News* to remind members of the 2007 rates instead of sending out individual letters. Those who pay by standing order need take no action.

We have introduced a Euro rate to make payment easier from within Europe. Also we are examining using the PayPal system for payments through the website, but this is proving more complicated to set up than we originally thought. Hopefully there will be news about this in the new year. Individual members in North America should make their payments to the Veatchs as usual. The subscription rates are:

	UK	Europe	US
<i>individuals</i>	£25	€39	\$47.50
<i>institutions</i>	£30	€47	\$60
<i>students</i>	£12.50	€20	\$25

Payments may be made by the following methods:

- 1) By cheque in sterling/Euro/US\$.
- 2) By BACS payment to: The Royal Bank of Scotland, Account 12111882, sort code 16 19 15, IBAN GB17RBOS16191512111882 BIC RBOSG82L.
- 3) By transfer to our Girobank account number 72-00-03, 26714308.
- 4) By cash payment in foreign currency.

If paying in a currency other than £, € or US\$ please add the equivalent of £5 as a contribution to UK bank conversion charges. Cheques should be made payable to 'Printing Historical Society'.

If you have a UK bank account and would like to pay by standing order, please let me know and I will send a form. Please send all remittances to me, Kenneth Brooks, at 3 Greenstead, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9NY, UK. Thank you.



ULTRABOLD

Simon Loxley

This autumn saw the appearance of the first issue of *Ultrabold*, the new journal for the St Bride Library. The Library has long wanted its own publication, and it has been extremely gratifying that everyone who has seen issue 1 so far has been full of praise and, even more importantly, wants to own a copy. Arguably in the past, St Bride has been guilty of not sufficiently promoting itself and the excellent programmes of events it hosts every year. With *Ultrabold* we hope to change that, and raise the profile of this vital institution. But although the journal is very much a St Bride publication, its content will take as its terrain anything connected with the graphic arts, and its tone will follow that of the St Bride conferences, ranging from the scholarly to the quirky and humorous.

Issue 1 contains the first part of Paul W. Nash's article on the struggles and achievements of women printers from the infancy of European printing, Alison Barnes's remarkable plotting of the territories of graffiti writers on the edges of Nottingham, and Will Hill's beautiful photographs of the vanishing shop signs of Budapest. Four type foundries show their designs, and there are reviews, mini-features and a look at some of the best work being produced in one of our design colleges. Readers can also win a copy of Rian Hughes's book *Ten year itch*, showcasing his remarkable output for Device Fonts.

The journal is in colour throughout, and will be appearing twice yearly. It is available (free of charge) to current

members of the Friends of St Bride Library, and all members will receive their copies soon (any member who does not receive a copy can contact the Friends for help). If you are not already a member, please consider joining, and by doing so supporting the Library, keeping it secure both now and for future generations.

St Bride Library is extremely grateful for the generous support of Principal Colour and Fenner Paper in helping to make the journal a reality. If you would like to contribute to *Ultrabold*, whether an article or just an interesting 'snippet', please contact Simon Loxley at ultrabold@stbride.org.

The Black Art

Keith Maslen

In the New Zealand winter of 2006 the University of Otago Library mounted an exhibition of works hand printed in its Bibliography Room between 1961 and 2005. Images from this exhibition, called 'The Black Art', can be viewed on the Library website at library.otago.ac.nz/exhibitions/blackarts/index.html.

In 1961 David Esplin and I begged a foolscap Albion handpress (dated 1845) and set up our own printing historical workshop. We named it after the Bodleian Library's Bibliography Room, where I had worked in 1951. Our facility was similarly meant to introduce senior students to the processes by which literary texts were



Keith Maslen with the Otakou Press Columbian

transmitted from the time of Gutenberg. David and I were also keen to develop our own interests: David because as reference librarian he was responsible for a collection now second only to the holdings of the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, and I to help me understand the printing accounts of the major eighteenth-century London printers William Bowyer, father and son. Since my retirement, my successor in the English Department, Dr Shef Rogers continues to enthuse his students.

After David left for North America in 1962, I carried on with the help of Library and English Department colleagues. Other presses with an interesting local provenance were



Interior of the Otakou Press

acquired, notably a royal Columbian by Thomas Long of Edinburgh (see page 2) and a Vandercook proof press.

Over the years many have been tempted to use the Room – some 700 of them, including well-known writers and artists. Partly to ensure that the equipment and materials were properly cared for, I drew up ‘Chapel Rules’, kept a register of users and required the deposit of at least two copies of everything printed. How provident, for what at the time may have interested only the printer and a small circle of friends became a document in the social history of the University. A computer punch card printed as a ball ticket in 1970 now reminds one of an almost forgotten era of computing.

A third use was found for the Room at a time when few commercial publishers were willing to consider verse, even by established writers. Little books of poetry by such New Zealand writers as James K. Baxter, Ruth Dallas, and Hone Tuwhare were printed and sold by a sympathetic local bookseller, John Griffin, at a price affordable by students. This brought in a modest income, a dollar or two on each copy after paying royalties.

In 2005, to signal a new lease of life under the management of the Special Collections Librarian, Dr Donald Kerr, the Bibliography Room was renamed the Otakou Press. (It was the early Scots settlers who preferred ‘Otago’ as the spelling for the name of the region.) Donald has instituted a ‘Printer in Residence’ scheme, which since 2003 has produced a limited edition book per year. In 2004, with profits from the sale of local poet Brian Turner’s *Faces in the water*, an etching press was acquired. Tara McLeod, owner-operator of his own Pear Tree Press in Auckland, has come here twice, and in 2006 hand-set and printed Lewis Carroll’s *The hunting of the snark*. Like all the productions of the Press, this sold out quickly.

La Musée de l’Image d’Epinal, France

Simon Loxley

It was my wife, studying the guidebook for our holiday in the Vosges, on France’s north-eastern border, who pointed out that there was a printing museum in Epinal, a nearby town. But once we were actually there family enthusiasm to pay a visit was strangely

mutated. Risking a barrage of criticism, I seized the opportunity of an imminent downpour to suggest that now would be the perfect day to go.

I need not have worried. The Musée de l’Image d’Epinal was airy and modern, with beautifully presented displays featuring a riot of visual delights. Although it holds temporary exhibitions on contemporary subjects, the core of the museum’s collection is based round the prodigious output of the Imagerie Pellerin. Founded in Epinal in 1796 by Jean-Charles Pellerin, the press gradually became a highly successful producer of popular colour prints, using wood-engraved illustrations hand-coloured by stencil – ‘pochoir’ – and later by lithography. Its golden years were from the middle of the nineteenth century to 1914, continuing at a slow decline until 1984 when it was taken over by a group of shareholders and the present museum was developed.

The range of subjects tackled was diverse – religious scenes, caricatures, posters, history told in pictures and captions, children’s games and educational aids, cut-out models and visual puzzles. The military was also a popular subject, from the glories of Napoleon to visualisations of battles from contemporary conflicts like the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, and illustrations of French soldiers in the colourful and varied uniforms of the decades before the Great War.

Some sets of pictures were purely humorous – ‘Disagreements and Inconveniences of Fishing’, ‘Inconveniences of Hunting’ and ‘Household Reforms’, in which the husband performs all the traditional wifely duties, including washing up and changing the baby; with a casual – or just realistic – recognition of domestic violence, conjugal beatings are handed out by the woman.

However, such darker moments were rare, and fortunately for my own domestic peace the rest of the family seemed to be enjoying it as much as I was. The children became absorbed in a poster showing how to make hand-shadow animals, with an intense debate developing over whether the ‘jockey and horse’ was actually physically possible. Who needs a PlayStation?

The museum’s excellent shop, which stocks a good selection of reproductions of the press’s classic prints, rounded off a highly enjoyable visit; even the children conceded it had been worth the trip.

EVENTS

Conference on Venetian printing
The books of Venice. A two-day conference to be held at Venice (Italy) on 9 and 10 March 2007. Venice’s books, like the buildings described by Ruskin, have long been considered one of the city’s greatest glories. Venice and the Veneto were hosts to some of the earliest printers in Italy, and were the workplace of master publishers from Aldus Manutius in the sixteenth century to the Remondini in the eighteenth. The city was also the home of remarkable libraries such as those of Cardinal Bessarion and Girolamo Ascanio Molin, and has been the subject of countless works of fact and fiction.

The conference is being organised by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) to discuss Venice as a centre of the printing industry, its book trade, print and manuscript culture, and the city as the subject of printed matter. Papers will be presented in three half-day plenary sessions, and there will also be a half-day printing workshop led by Peter Koch of Editions Koch, which will give participants a hands-on introduction to Koch’s work, including his new edition of Joseph Brodsky’s *Watermark*.

The keynote addresses will be given by Lilian Armstrong (Wellesley College), Neil Harris (Universita di Udine) and Marino Zorzi (Biblioteca Marciana). For further details please contact the organisers Craig Kallendorf (European and Classical Languages, Texas A and M University, College Station, TX 77843, kallendrf@tamu.edu), or Lisa Pon (Art History Department, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75205, lpon@smu.edu).

Lectures

Printmaking with an Albion Press by the wood-engraver Edwina Ellis. Tuesday 16 January 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the School of Art, Buarth Mawr, Aberystwyth. Held by the Aberystwyth Bibliographical Group. All are welcome to attend.

Working with William Pickering by Graham Moss of the Incline Press. Monday 12 March. Held by the Manchester Bibliographical Society. All welcome. For further details please contact the organiser Brenda Scragg at brenda.scragg@ntlworld.com.

Penny plain, tuppence coloured: marketing books with Sweynheym and Pannartz by Martin Davies. Tuesday 17 April at 6:00 p.m. in the Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, University College, Gower Street, London. The Bibliographical Society's 'Graham Pollard Memorial Lecture'. Members may bring guests.

PHS Journal

The next issue of the Printing Historical Society *Journal* (number 10) is due to appear in the spring. The Society is aware that it has fallen behind in its publication schedule, but hopes to make up lost ground during 2007 and 2008, and to issue at least one monograph in lieu of a number of the *Journal* in the coming months. The editor would welcome scholarly papers on subjects relating to printing history, including (but not limited to) type and typefounding (from hand-casting to digital technology), printers and printing businesses, design for print, printing techniques and processes of all eras, archives and collections of relevant material, printing and typesetting machinery and equipment of all periods, print-making and graphic techniques (including the work of particular practitioners), and printing history as a perspective on publishing and the book arts generally. To discuss a paper, or a possible subject for a paper, please contact Peggy Smith (see below).

Become a Friend of the NPHT

Anyone interested in supporting the Trust's work of preserving historical printing artefacts and archives is invited to become a 'Friend'. The minimum annual subscription of £10 for individuals and £50 for corporate bodies becomes due on 1 January each year. Cheques, made payable to 'The National Printing Heritage Trust', should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, The Pinfold, Church Road, Dodleston, Chester CH4 9NG. Bankers' Order forms are available.

Award for Michael Twyman

The American Printing History Association will announce, at its annual meeting in New York on 27 January 2007, that Michael Twyman is to receive its 'Individual Award'. It is hoped to include further details in the next issue of *Printing History News*.

Printing Historical Society Members

The Printing Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members for 2006:

Catherine Armstrong, Coventry
Robert Banham, Reading
Les Baynam, Bucknell
Benjamin Brundell, Sowerby Bridge
Johan de Zoete, Utrecht, The Netherlands
James Heward, Winchester
Damir Jekuc, Rijeka, Croatia
Ieuan Lloyd, Worcester
Sean Lynch, Newtownards, N. Ireland
Hugh Macfarlane, Wickford
Angela McShane-Jones, Kenilworth
Graham Moss, Oldham
John Moxham, Salisbury
Andrew Newton, Snaith
Robert Oldham, Doswell, USA
Gordon Radley, Ilkley
John Scott, Winterborne Stickland
Juliet Shen, Seattle, USA
Mrs J. Watson, Eye

NEW BOOK

Index to the Court Books of the Stationers' Company, 1679-1717, by Alison Shell and Alison Embrow (general editor Robin Myers, with an introduction by Alison Shell). This book, the latest in a succession of indices to the Court Books covering the period from 1576, includes data on printers, booksellers, bookbinders and others engaged in the book trades, as well as on subjects such as Acts of Parliament, publishing genres, Company activities and officers, piracy and legal disputes, and particular printed works. Published by the Bibliographical Society and Oxford University Press, copies will be available from early 2007. 433 pages, octavo format, bound in cloth or available as a CD (prices to be announced).

St Bride Library opening hours

*exhibitions are open
at the same times*

Tuesday 12:00-5:30 p.m.
Wednesday 12:00-9:00 p.m.
Thursday 12:00-5:30 p.m.

Old English Sorts

Brian Donaghey

Could someone please inform me of sources for obtaining the special types needed for hand-setting Old English texts, either second-hand or new. I would need a number of sorts of the thorn letter (þ and Þ, lower and upper case), and the eth letter (ð and Ð, lower and upper case). It would also be helpful, though not absolutely essential, to have the matching æ and Æ ligatures. They should ideally be in 12-point size, and for purchase for permanent use. These sorts could be found in a fount used for printing Icelandic. Of course, if anyone has a complete Anglo-Saxon fount that would be a great prize (subject to cost)! If you can help, please contact Brian Donaghey at b.s.donaghey@sheffield.ac.uk or on 0114 2584275.

Corrigendum

On page 3 of *PHN12*, in the note on the census of copies of the Kelmscott Chaucer, Sylvia Peterson's e-mail address was wrongly printed. The correct address is swholton2@cs.com. Apologies for the error.

USEFUL CONTACTS

National Printing Heritage Trust

www.npht.org.uk
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lithomn@totalise.co.uk

Printing Historical Society

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Friends of St Bride Library

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